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ABSTRACT

This guide is intended to assist rehabilitation counselors, school guidance personnel, and others involved in administering and interpreting the results of the Vocational Decision-Making Interview (VDMI). (The VDMI is a structured interview instrument that was developed to facilitate the assessment of an individual's vocational decision-making capabilities, identification of an interviewee's unique decision-making needs, and development of an individual vocational decision-making profile.) The first part of the guide traces the development of the VDMI; summarizes selected research results with the VDMI; outlines its structure; and describes its special applications in the following areas: vocational evaluation, general counseling and guidance, Individualized Education Program (IEP)) and Individualized Written Rehabilitation Plan (IWRP) planning, determination of group characteristics, and program development. Discussed next are the following aspects of VDMI administration: preparing the interviewing environment (interviewer and interviewee preparation), selecting an appropriate and qualified interviewer and heeding certain interviewing cautions, and administering and scoring the VDMI. The third section, which deals with interpreting VDMI results, covers clinical versus open-ended interpretations, normative comparisons, and procedures for profiling subcategories. The fourth section consists of tables of norms. A profile sheet and a copy of the VDMI are included with the manual. (MN)

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VOCATIONAL DECISION-MAKING INTERVIEW

ADMINISTRATION MANUAL

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VOCATIONAL DECISION-MAKING INTERVIEW

ADMINISTRATION MANUAL

1986

Thomas Czerlinsky, Ph.D.

Paul M. McCray, M.S.

Research and Training Center
Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute
School of Education and Human Services
University of Wisconsin-Stout
Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751

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OVERVIEW OF THE VOCATIONAL DECISION-MAKING INTERVIEW

Vocational decision-making is an integral component of the career development process. The ability of individuals to make appropriate, timely, and realistic decisions about career options influences their likelihood of achieving appropriate, long-term goals. It also lays the groundwork for much of the training and education that must often take place to achieve those goals. Vocational indecision can present a major obstacle to the career development of all individuals. But the consequences of vocational indecision may be greatly magnified for individuals with disabilities. Such individuals must frequently overcome additional obstacles to career development (e.g., discrimination, inaccessibility, cognitive and/or physical impairment). Thus, the importance of understanding and enhancing the vocational decision-making process among people with disabilities is evident. It is certainly an important process for adults with disabilities. And it may be particularly important for young adults who are preparing to make the transition from school to the world of work.

Although the career development process and the role which vocational decision-making plays in this process have been studied extensively among college and high school age populations, relatively little work has focussed upon individuals with disabilities (Phillips et al., 1983). Studies have covered a range of topics relevant to understanding the issues and problems surrounding the vocational decision-making process in general, such as the effects of anxiety, risk-taking, self-concept, and sex differences (to name just a few). However, a paucity of research has addressed the topic of vocational decision-making among individuals with disabilities. Little is known about this group's vocational decision-making skills, or about the possible remediation or treatment strategies which might be directed toward this realm.

Development of the Vocational Decision-Making Interview (*VDMI*)

The original purpose of the research resulting in the development of the Vocational Decision-Making Interview (*VDMI*) was twofold. First, the research was conducted to address the needs of rehabilitation counselors, vocational evaluators, school guidance personnel, researchers, and disabled individuals themselves to better understand the process of vocational decision-making among individuals with disabilities. Little is known about the extent to which the vocational decision-making process differs between disabled and non-disabled groups, or how this process might be facilitated among people with disabilities.

Secondly, the research was conducted in an effort to develop a valid, reliable, and useful interview to assess the vocational decision-making capacities of special populations. Such an interview should be helpful in identifying problem areas within this realm, and suggesting effective treatment strategies directed toward the alleviation of these particular problem areas. The product resulting from this line of research was a relatively easy-to-use interview which can be used to identify individual problem areas and strengths and help facilitate the overall career development process within this group. The *VDMI* fulfills this need.

The *VDMI* provides several types of information. First, it provides empirical information regarding an individual's vocational decision-making capabilities, on a number of dimensions, in comparison to a norm reference group. This type of information is useful for counselors, vocational evaluators, and other personnel concerned with measuring a disabled individual's global decision-making skills on a number of discrete areas. Thus, the *VDMI* can effectively diagnose an individual's decision-making skills in relation to a reference group.

The second major purpose of the *VDMI* is clinical. The interview includes open-ended questions requiring content responses. The interviewee's responses allow the interviewer to make clinical judgments and observations about unique vocational decision-making needs and capabilities of the interviewee. The *VDMI* can identify such problem areas and therefore provide the information needed to explore possible treatment or training strategies designed to help the individual overcome these problems.

Thirdly, individual *VDMI* profiles can be developed. These profiles indicate the relative strengths and deficits of an individual on each of the three major scales: Self-Appraisal, Decision-Making Readiness, and Employment Readiness. This information is useful in helping the interviewer define particular strengths and weaknesses in the realm of vocational decision- making within an individual.

Finally, it must be emphasized that the *VDMI* is a structured interview and not a traditional psychometric test instrument. As a result, users will find some differences in the type of norm reference information provided with the *VDMI* and the structure of the interview items themselves. The norms provided are based on handicapped individuals served in vocational rehabilitation facilities and handicapped students in secondary school systems (see Section III for a more detailed description). Most

importantly, as an interview, the *VDMI*'s primary utility is as an information gathering tool specifically related to determining vocational decision-making readiness. There are no "right or wrong" responses for interview items. Interviewers will also find that the *VDMI* is easier to administer than many traditional test instruments and requires relatively little "formal" test administration experience to administer properly.

Summary of Selected Research Results with the *VDMI*

Development of the *VDMI*, and research to establish its psychometric properties, has been conducted in a variety of settings and has involved several subject populations. Test sites included vocational rehabilitation facilities, vocational technical schools, secondary level public schools, and sheltered workshops. Subject populations included vocational rehabilitation clients and also special education students in secondary schools. A wide variety of disability categories were included.

The first research study (Strohmer, 1979) was a between-subjects comparison of "Vocationally Decided" versus "Vocationally Undecided" vocational rehabilitation clients. The purpose of this study was to determine the discriminant validity of the *VDMI*. Another study (Czerlinsky et al., in press) investigated whether an active vocationally oriented intervention — vocational evaluation — would evidence treatment effects which the *VDMI* could discern. One study (Czerlinsky, 1985) was a long-term *VDMI* reliability study. It used a test-retest design with testing intervals ranging from two weeks to nine months with a special education population. An additional study (Teskey, 1986) utilized *VDMI* scores as correlates of interviewee job income about three years later. And lastly, in the clinical area, the *VDMI* was tested with regard to its utility in determining student needs and developing effective individualized career development programs in secondary school settings (Czerlinsky & Ryan, 1986). Encouraging findings resulted from these studies. A summary of some of the main results of these studies are the following:

1. Internal consistency analyses (internal reliability) showed that the three *VDMI* sub-scales evidenced satisfactory internal consistency (Strohmer, 1979).

2. Test-retest reliability results, with one-week test-retest intervals, showed that the *VDMI* sub-scale scores remained significantly stable over time, with a sample of vocational rehabilitation clients. The reliability coefficients (Pearson rs) ranged from .62 to .80 (all p.◄.01) (Czerlinsky et al., in press).

3. With a special education student sample, the *VDMI* was administered at test-retest intervals ranging from two weeks to a full school year. Reliability coefficients ranged from .55 to .87 (all p.◄.01), with no drop in reliability as the test-retest intervals increased (Czerlinsky, 1985).

4. A major validity criterion was that the three *VDMI* sub-scales and Total score discriminate between individuals chosen a priori to differ in level of vocational decision-making capacity. This discriminant validity criterion was met, in that vocationally undecided persons (individuals with disabilities just beginning vocational evaluation) scored significantly lower on two of the three *VDMI* sub-scales than vocationally decided persons with disabilities (in vocational training programs). Means of the third scale were in the predicted direction, but did not reach the p.◄.05 significance level (Strohmer, 1979).

5. Another validity study showed that the self-ratings on the *VDMI* of individuals with disabilities correlated highly and significantly with independent ratings, on the same dimensions, carried out by vocational evaluators working closely with these individuals. This supported the interpretation that *VDMI* scores were valid indicators of vocational decision-making strengths and weaknesses of individuals with disabilities (Czerlinsky, 1985).

6. An additional study showed that the *VDMI* is sensitive to treatment interventions directed toward the realm of vocational decision- making. Clients with disabilities were interviewed with the *VDMI* at the beginning of vocational evaluation and again at completion of this service. Data analyses revealed that each of the *VDMI* sub-scales showed significant mean increases when post-evaluation scores were compared to pre-evaluation scores. There were no corresponding increases in a control group which did not receive vocational evaluation (Czerlinsky et al., in press).

7. A recent study demonstrated that *VDMI* scores were significantly positively correlated with level of income, three years after the *VDMI* scores were obtained (Teskey, 1986).

These results support the statistical reliability and validity of the interview. The *VDMI* shows satisfactory reliability and validity and identifies content areas which are critical in the remediation of vocational decision-making problems of persons with disabilities.

Structure of the *VDMI*

The *VDMI* is a 63 item structured interview. Three major scales form the basis of the *VDMI*:

- DECISION-MAKING READINESS - This twenty-two item scale addresses individuals' readiness to make vocational decisions based upon the occupational knowledge they possess and their decision-making skills.

- EMPLOYMENT READINESS - This scale contains thirteen items. The focus of these items is on examining individuals' desire to obtain work and the external pressures that may influence an individual's motivation and ability to make a vocational decision.

- SELF-APPRAISAL - This is a twenty-four item scale which focuses on individuals' knowledge and perception of themselves (i.e. their abilities, needs, etc.) and their history of vocational decision-making.

The three scales were designed to directly address those basic areas which an individual may improve through career education classes, occupational exploration programs, employment readiness training, job search training, vocational evaluation, or vocational counseling. Scores on each scale, as well as the total score, provide estimates of how adept the individual is at making vocational decisions.

In addition, each of these three major scales can be further broken down into individual subscales. These subscales may be used to develop a more detailed profile of an individual's decision-making needs. Thus, the subscales provide more specific information.

Each of the 63 *VDMI* items is a statement which is read to the interviewee. As an interview, clarification of items which may not have been understood is perfectly permissable. The format is such that the individual then responds with "True," "Not Sure," or "False." For over half the items, respondents also answer open-ended questions which can be used for clinical purposes.

The *VDMI* can be used on the one hand on an individual item basis for revealing specific problem areas the individual may have. This is particularly the case with the open-ended items. In addition, the three scales can be used when the *VDMI* is used for less specific applications or to develop individual interviewee profiles.

The overall *VDMI* is individually administered. Total administration time ranges from one-half hour to one hour, depending upon the person being interviewed and their response times. Because it is a verbally administered structured interview, the *VDMI* offers a number of distinct advantages over traditional paper and pencil assessment instruments.

For special populations such as handicapped individuals, three advantages are most evident. First, the mode of administration eliminates the problem of an individual having an inadequate reading level to satisfactorily respond to the interview items. Although the reading level of the *VDMI* is not high (Gunning Fog Index, 1979, analyses showed that the actual reading level of the instrument is at a 6.7 grade level — satisfactory for a large portion of the individuals which take the *VDMI*), verbal administration insures that all of the items are understood, and virtually eliminates the problems caused by missing data. Secondly, because it is verbally administered, the *VDMI* appears well-suited for use with individuals with visual impairments.

The *VDMI* was designed for individual administration. While group interviewing situations afford the examiner an opportunity to reduce the amount of time involved in the interview process, it has also been found that it reduces the clinical utility of the instrument. Even more importantly, it increases the likelihood that respondents will respond in an unreliable manner as a result of not understanding the administration process, indifference, response set, or many other possible causes. As a result, users are encouraged to only administer the *VDMI* on an individual basis.

Special Applications of the *VDMI*

In addition to its general use as a measurement and clinical tool, the *VDMI* can be used in several different types of specialized settings. In most cases, both the measurement and clinical components of the *VDMI* will often overlap and will be of equal interest to the examiner.

Vocational Evaluation. Vocational evaluation personnel will find that the *VDMI* is of particular relevance to their work. First, it can be used to assess the vocational decision-making skills of individuals during the vocational assessment process. Secondly, it can be used during the early stages of the evaluation to help plan specific assessment activities to improve interviewees' decision-making skills and increase the cost effectiveness of the vocational evaluation process.

In addition, when used as a clinical tool in vocational evaluation settings, the *VDMI* will help the evaluator and the interviewee develop recommendations with regard to likely treatment or training strategies where problem areas have been identified. As such, it is a useful planning tool.

Vocational evaluation programs located within school settings will find that the *VDMI* is particularly useful as a diagnostic tool to identify problem areas and develop treatment methods designed to enhance the student's career development during the education process. In addition, many vocational evaluation programs located in rehabilitation settings will find that the *VDMI* is most useful in helping clients identify vocational decision-making problems and develop more realistic short-term vocational goals. In both cases the *VDMI* is useful in improving interviewee involvement in the total evaluation process.

There are several other specific areas where the *VDMI* can play an important role within vocational evaluation. One of these is in terms of facilitating rapport between the evaluator and the interviewee. When administered at the outset of a vocational evaluation, the *VDMI* can help ease normal test or interview apprehension often experienced as well as serve as a useful basis for enhancing communication. Use of the *VDMI* can demonstrate to the interviewee that the evaluator is interested in his/her welfare and that the interviewer wants to assist in vocational planning by collecting information on the interviewee's preferences rather than merely accumulating test scores.

Of most obvious importance, the *VDMI* is an important tool for obtaining vocationally-relevant information. The *VDMI* is a thorough instrument covering a broad range of topics. It is designed to focus upon vocational decision-making areas which people with disabilities must address if they are to optimize their own career development. Thus, use of the *VDMI* can provide both the evaluator and interviewee with practical information which is often neither provided during the normal referral process nor systematically addressed during the traditional evaluation process. In essence, results of the *VDMI* help reveal the interviewee's preparedness for vocational evaluation and making job choices. In addition, because of the format of the *VDMI*, interviewees who have limited ability to verbalize their thoughts have found that the three-point scales ("True," "Not Sure," or "False") provide sufficient opportunity for revealing their preferences. Examinees who are more articulate have found that the open-ended questions offer additional opportunity for self-expression.

Finally, when used at the outset of vocational evaluation, the *VDMI* is an excellent tool for fostering the individual evaluation planning process. Based on interviewee responses, the evaluator is better prepared to modify the preliminary evaluation plan to fit newly-established interests, abilities and limitations. Activities previously planned may be entirely eliminated (e.g. specific work samples), and replaced by more pertinent activities such as job site evaluations or the use of different psychometric testing instruments.

General Counseling and Guidance. Vocational rehabilitation counselors and guidance counselors in secondary school settings will find the *VDMI* to be useful for program planning. The *VDMI* can help individuals identify vocational decision-making problems which may be remediated through the counseling process. For example, among individuals whose difficulties are identified as stemming largely from lack of self-awareness or self-esteem, counseling can be a useful technique to successfully help resolve this difficulty. In this manner, the *VDMI* can be used by school-based counselors as well as vocational rehabilitation counselors working within state agencies to diagnose an individual's decision-making problems prior to developing an IEP or IWRP. In some cases it may even be used, along with other resources, as part of the initial feasibility determination process that is such an integral part of the State-Federal Vocational Rehabilitation program.

IEP and IWRP Planning. Establishing realistic vocational goals is one of the keys to successful career development. However, for some individuals it is difficult to gauge how extensive their interest is in a given occupational area, as well as their adeptness at making vocational decisions. In such cases this can lead to the development of unrealistic Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or Individualized Written Rehabilitation Plans (IWRPs). The end result of this may be vocational failure, incomplete vocational training programs, or program dropouts.

The *VDMI* provides a useful mechanism for assessing individual vocational decision-making skills prior to focusing efforts on development of these plans. In cases where significant vocational decision-making difficulties are identified, the plan may then more properly focus on the immediate problems at hand, prior to beginning specific skill building training programs or job placement efforts in occupational areas which may prove unrealistic or undesirable for the client. As a result, the *VDMI* can provide a unifying mechanism for planning several different services that cut across disciplines. These services may begin with prevocational services in some instances. Later, they may address more narrowly focused vocational training efforts (such as placement in specific on-the-job-training programs). Under these circumstances the *VDMI* is not only beneficial for the client, it also helps reduce the expenditure of case service monies or related resources on individuals who are not prepared for specific

vocational training and are therefore even more likely to become program dropouts.

Determining Group Characteristics. The *VDMI* can be used to determine the vocational decision-making skills of relatively homogenous groups of individuals. For example, it can be used to measure the skills of a group of special needs students. Once common problems are noted, it is then possible to develop specialized treatment or training programs which can be applied to the group as a whole, thereby increasing training efficiency.

Program Development. On-going use of the *VDMI* can enhance the program development process. It can help practitioners identify recurring problems among special needs populations and develop adaptive programs designed to meet those common needs. In this way, the *VDMI* can be used to identify more global characteristics and needs which in turn can be used as an objective basis for specialized program development directed at those common needs. Without tools such as the *VDMI*, this is a difficult task since there is a wide range of vocational decision-making preparedness among individuals with widely varying abilities, educational experiences, and vocational goals. The identification of common needs is a first step in building successful new programs and the *VDMI* has much to offer in this regard.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE *VDMI*

As indicated previously in this manual, the *VDMI* differs from most traditional psychometric test instruments in that it is a structured interview. This interview format requires interviewers to work with students or clients on a one-to-one basis. This type of format affords both the interviewer and the interviewee an opportunity to interact closely during the interviewing situation. By doing so, the interviewer is able to not only obtain standard bits of information related to the subscales and major content areas but also to make clinical observations and evaluations about the interviewee.

Interviewers should be sensitive to any indications suggesting that a particular interviewee lacks the skills needed to comprehend or respond to any items on the interview. Although the *VDMI* items are written on a sixth grade reading level and interviewees must only understand the items, in some cases the interviewers might consider reviewing an interviewee's case file or other pertinent information prior to conducting the interview. With this background information, the interviewer may be better prepared to make clinical judgments about the appropriateness of a particular interviewee's responses.

In addition, the examiner is responsible for ensuring that proper preparation occurs prior to administration. This preparation is outlined briefly below.

Preparing the Interviewing Environment

Since the *VDMI* is a structured interview, it should be administered in a location where distractions and possible interruptions are kept to a minimum. Generally, approximately 30-60 minutes are needed to conduct the entire interview. Adequate precautions should be taken to ensure that sufficient time is provided to administer the entire *VDMI* without interruption.

Interviewer Preparation. Interviewers must have a thorough knowledge of the interview prior to its administration. In addition, as a structured interview, it is beneficial if users have experience in the general interviewing process itself. They should be able to establish rapport with clients or students as quickly as possible since this will facilitate the overall administration process. It is also important that interviewers familiarize themselves with the specific items since these may sometimes require clarification. By studying these items, interviewers will be better prepared to properly clarify many common questions interviewees may have about specific items.

Interviewers should also be constantly alert and sensitive to any indications that an interviewee is having difficulty understanding a significant number of the interview items, since this can invalidate the results of the interview. Once again, the ability to make clinical judgments about the appropriateness of certain responses can be enhanced if the interviewer has access to the interviewee's case file and other relevant background information prior to conducting the interview.

Interviewee Preparation. Interviewees should also be prepared before they take the *VDMI*. They must understand that there are no "right" or "wrong" answers and that they will not be graded on the *VDMI* (which may have been the case with most test situations they have experienced). The importance of responding honestly and openly to each question should be emphasized. Of equal significance, the interviewer should strive to develop a positive, supportive atmosphere. This will further facilitate rapport between the interviewer and the client or student.

Additional Considerations

Who Is Appropriate? The *VDMI* is designed for use with individuals who need to make vocational decisions and who have the intellectual capacity needed to make such decisions either independently or with assistance from various support professionals (e.g., counseling and guidance personnel, vocational evaluators, rehabilitation counselors). Use of the *VDMI* is not restricted to any specific disability group. However, it may be inappropriate for use with severely mentally handicapped individuals who lack the cognitive skills needed to effectively participate in the interviewing process.

Qualifications of Interviewers. The *VDMI* is designed to be administered by individuals who have training or experience in general interviewing skills and knowledge of the world of work, the career development process, and the vocational preparation and needs of individuals with various disabilities. It is not recommended that proctors be used to administer the interview, although they can be used to score the standardized portions of the interview (which do not have clinical applications). Vocational evaluators, counseling and guidance personnel, vocational rehabilitation counselors, work adjustment specialists, psychologists, special educators and other professionals will generally be most appropriate for administering the *VDMI*.

Interviewing Cautions. As previously suggested, there are a number of important issues interviewers must be concerned with when administering the *VDMI*. The interviewer must insure that the instrument is being used with individuals who are able to understand and respond to the general content of the interview.

As mentioned above, the *VDMI* items were worded so as to minimize misunderstandings due to interviewees' being unable to understand the items. A Gunning Fog Index was conducted on the *VDMI* reading level. This index showed that the actual reading level of the *VDMI* was at the *6.7 grade reading level.* Such a 6+ grade reading level is appropriate for a large number of potential interviewees of the *VDMI*. In addition, the *VDMI* does not require the interviewee to read the items, since the items are read to the person. In this light, the reading level of the instrument suggests that the *VDMI* should be appropriate to a large segment of potential clients or students. It would, however, not be appropriate for some.

In cases where the interview is underway and it becomes clearly apparent to the interviewer that the interviewee does not comprehend the items, the interview should be discontinued. In other cases where the comprehension problem is not so readily established, the interviewer may choose to complete the interview and then carefully examine the responses for further indications of discrepancies which might invalidate the results. This can be established by comparing the open-ended answers with the "True," "Not Sure," and "False" responses. For example, for item number 1, if a interviewee indicates that he/she has been thinking about some specific jobs but is then unable to indicate any of these jobs, it may suggest that the interviewee's answers are unreliable. If this same response pattern continues throughout the interview, it is generally a good indicator that the respondent's overall profile may be unreliable.

In some cases the *VDMI* will be administered to individuals who are currently undergoing medical treatment. Under such conditions, the interviewer must be alert to any indications that the interviewee's emotional state or intellectual capacities may be adversely affected by the medical treatment, particularly in cases where medications are involved. In addition, it is important for the interviewer to limit the number of interviews conducted within any interviewing schedule to the extent that his/her observational and interview administration skills are not adversely affected by scheduling too many interviews within any given period of time.

Instructions for Administering the *VDMI*

The 63 item *VDMI* is fairly straightforward to administer. The majority of the items require the interviewee to respond with a "True," "Not Sure", or "False" choice. Approximately half of the "True", "False", or "Not Sure" items also elicit a clinically-oriented, open-ended response.

The *VDMI* interview booklet contains all of the items. There are four parts to the booklet. These are the: Decision-Making Readiness Subscale (22 items); Employment Readiness Subscale (13 items); Self-Appraisal Scale (24 items); and four Summary items. Some of the items on each of the three subscales are composed of two parts — the basic item itself, followed by the open-ended prompt which accompanies that item. The left half of each page contains the actual items (labelled "Items" on the interview booklet), while the right half of the page contains the open-ended prompts (note that not all "Items" are followed by open-ended prompts).

The actual protocol for administration of the *VDMI* is as follows. To obtain data for each of the three *VDMI* subscales, the interviewer reads each item to the interviewee. The interviewer should be sensitive to make sure that the item has been understood. Should any item not be understood by the interviewee, the interviewer must rephrase and clarify that item and then repeat it. It is important to remember that the primary purpose of the *VDMI* is to gather information that accurately gauges the interviewee's vocational decision-making skills. It is an interview and *not a test.* It's primary purpose can only be achieved when the interviewee accurately understands each item. Therefore, it is not necessary that any item which is not properly understood simply be repeated verbatim. The interviewer should paraphrase until the item is understood. Given the sentence structure of the items, this should not pose a particular problem for *VDMI* administration. However, for clarifying items, interviewers must use their clinical skills to make sure they *do not lead answers* in any particular direction.

Once the item is understood, the interviewee responds with either a "True", "Not Sure", or "False" for that item. This response is then recorded by the interviewer in the interview booklet. To the right of each item is a column labelled T, NS, and F. These correspond to the interviewee's "True", "Not Sure", or "False" response. The interviewer circles the "1" or "0" under the corresponding interviewee's response.

After the interviewee's "T, NS, F" response is recorded as a "1 or 0" on the booklet, the open-ended prompt on the right side of the page corresponding to that item is read to the interviewee (for those items which are followed by such a prompt). This should be done regardless of the interviewee's response to the item. The responses should be recorded verbatim on the spaces provided for them. Note that interviewees may not be able to give all or any responses which are asked for. This is clinically important to observe.

After this is completed, the interviewee should go on to the next item and repeat the above procedures. This should be continued until all 59 items of the three subscales have been covered. By following this procedure, there should be no missing data for any of the items (on the "T, NS, F" responses).

The last four items of the interview (60-63) do not require "T, NS, F" responses from the interviewee. They are simply treated like the other open- ended prompts. However, these items may be very important in terms of the information which they provide to the interviewer.

For purposes of obtaining *only* subscale scores, the open-ended prompts corresponding to the items are not necessary. However, past experience with the *VDMI* clearly indicates that the information provided by the open-ended prompts is very important and revealing for clinical purposes. For example, the information provided by the open-ended prompts may be used to:

1. Further assist examinees in establishing realistic vocational options;

2. Identify indicators suggesting that a particular examinee's responses are unreliable during the interview process;

3. Assist both the interviewer and interviewee in identifying specific vocational decision-making problem areas; and

4. Develop remedial treatment or training strategies designed to help interviewee's overcome specific vocational decision-making skill deficits.

Much of this information might not otherwise be normally obtained from the "T, NS, F" items themselves. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the interviewer collect data for all 63 items in the interview and include the open-ended prompts which go along with their respective items.

Scoring the *VDMI*

Actual scoring of the *VDMI* is done in the interview booklet itself after completion of the interview. Each subscale — Decision-Making Readiness, Employment Readiness, and Self-Appraisal — receives a separate score. Only the actual items themselves are used to derive the scores. The open-ended prompts are not scored. The scores derived are comprised of the total number of "1" responses for each subscale. After the last item of each of the subscales, a space is provided for recording this score. For example, to obtain the score for Decision-Making Readiness, the interviewer counts the total number of "ones" which he or she has circled for items 1 - 22, and then records that total in the space after item 22. Likewise, the total number of "ones" for Employment Readiness is recorded after Item 35, and the total number of "ones" for Self-Appraisal is recorded after Item 59. Care should be taken, when adding the "1" responses, to add by actual number, and not by position. This is important since, for most of the items, the "1" is on the left of the column, but for a lesser number of items, the "1" is located on the right side of the column. Thus, counting to obtain subscale scores should be done by number, rather than by position within the "T, NS, F" column.

Once these three scores have been obtained, they should then be transferred to the appropriate column labelled "Score" on the first page of the interview booklet. To obtain the *VDMI* Total Score, the interviewer should sum the three subscale scores recorded in this column on the first page of the booklet, and enter this sum in the fourth space labelled "Total *VDMI* Score."

INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

Clinical or Open-ended Interpretations.

A major strength of the *VDMI* is that it provides two distinct types of data. Both types will serve somewhat different purposes.

One specific type of data which the *VDMI* provides is clinical in nature. The open-ended prompts give clear, concise information about the interviewee. This type of information should be very helpful to professionals working with the interviewee, since it gives broad insights into the vocational decision-making strengths and deficits of the individual. Such information is of the type which is needed by professionals concerned with the vocational decision-making processes of individuals. The clinical information which the *VDMI* provides comes directly from the open-ended responses on the interview and does not require any special scoring techniques.

The interviewer may also wish to take one additional step in analyzing the results of the interview and the individual's decision-making readiness. The interviewer can compare any discrepancies between what the interviewee said about him/herself on the "True, Not Sure, False" items against how the interviewee responded to the corresponding open-ended items. For example, for Item 1, the client or student might respond with a "True", indicating that he or she has been thinking about some specific jobs. Yet, on the open- ended section, he/she may be unable to name any of them. This suggests that the individual may be quite unrealistic in his or her self-assessment of knowledge about some specific jobs. The interviewer will then have to make a judgement as to whether the individual has a major problem in this area and also whether the problem needs to be addressed in a remediation program.

Secondly, the *VDMI* provides subscore data. This type of data can be very useful in: 1) comparing patterns of scores within the same interviewee; 2) comparing patterns of scores of the interviewee with a specific comparison group of relevance (for example, an individual student interviewee's scores could be compared to the scores of other students within the same class or program); and 3) comparing scores and patterns of scores of the interviewee with normative data. To fully utilize the subscore data, reference should be made to the narrative regarding the normative data and to the norm tables.

Normative Comparisons.

This section supplies the normative data which has been obtained with the *VDMI* research to date. The three subscale scores, as well as *VDMI* Total score, which are recorded on the front of the *VDMI* booklet, should be used with these norms.

The norms were developed from two samples. One was a sample of 108 disabled vocational rehabilitation clients at two settings. There were no significant differences between the *VDMI* means of the clients at these two sites. The second sample was comprised of 353 disabled high school students in special education settings. Since there were no significant differences between the client sample and the special education student sample, these two samples were pooled to form a total sample of 461 disabled individuals. This sample comprised the subject sample upon which the norms are based.

Descriptive Statistics. The following are the summary statistics for the three **VDMI** scales and Total Score (n=461).

SUBSCALE	MEAN	STD. DEV.	MIN.	MAX.	RANGE	MEDIAN	MODE	SKEWNESS
Decision-Making Readiness	12.3	4.30	0	22	22	12	14	-0.15
Employment Readiness	8.4	2.12	2	13	11	9	9	-0.31
Self-Appraisal	14.2	4.00	1	23	22	14	16	-0.22
Total *VDMI*	34.9	8.69	6	55	49	35	37	-0.24

These summary statistics describe the characteristics of the VDMI subscales and Total Score for this sample of 461 interviewees. They are presented to give the interviewer some understanding of the characteristics of these scales.

Percentiles and T-Scores. The tables of norms present the normative data for the three *VDMI* subscales and Total Score, based upon the sample of 461 individuals mentioned above. Included are the actual scores, the T-scores corresponding to each of the possible scores, the percentage of interviewees at each of these scores, and the percentiles (cumulative percentages) for individuals at each of the scores in ascending order. Data is presented separately for Decision-Making Readiness, Employment Readiness, Self-Appraisal, and the Total Score. The purpose of presenting the percentiles and the T-scores is to enable the interviewer to make judgments about individual interviewee's scores in comparison to a large sample of clients and special education students. This enables comparisons of the interviewee's responses to a norm group. It should be noted that this data (Percentiles and T-scores) should be obtained for each interviewee and entered on the two appropriate columns on the front of the Interview Booklet. Knowing this about the interviewee's scores will enable making statements about the relative strengths and weaknesses of the three different *VDMI* domains within the same individual, and also enable judgments about particular areas which may pose specific problems for the individual. Percentiles and T-scores are necessary since raw scores themselves are relatively meaningless when comparing the individual to a group. They would say nothing about the number or percentage of other individuals with more or less problems in the specific domains being assessed.

The extent to which an individual's score on any scale indicates a significant problem is a matter of clinical judgement on the interviewer's part. It is recommended that a score falling one standard deviation below the mean for any specific subscale or the *VDMI* Total score (which would be equivalent to a T-score of *40 or less*) should be considered as indicative of a possible problem which may require some form of assistance. This assistance is frequently provided in the form of individual program planning or through simply providing the individual with needed information. In other cases, the possible courses of action may not be so simple.

In developing a remediation or treatment strategy, the interviewer should study the responses which fall one standard deviation below the mean (*T-score of 40 or less*) and attempt to determine the exact nature of the individual's decision-making deficit. This additional analysis should provide further insight into the nature of the individual's deficit and suggest possible remediation strategies which would be most effective.

Profiling of Sub-Categories.

The items which make up the *VDMI* were designed to tap a number of specific topics which were considered to relate to possible problem areas in vocational decision-making. These specific topics are the building blocks which make up the three subscales of the *VDMI*. Specifically, the structure of the *VDMI* (and the individual items comprising this structure) is the following:

VDMI items

Decision-Making Readiness
- Informational Problems (Occupational Knowledge)
  - Opportunities and Requirements . . . . 1 - 5
  - Tasks and Duties . . . . . 6 - 9
  - Rewards and Punishers . . . . . 10 - 14
- Decision-Making Problems
  - Acquisition of Information . . . . . 15 - 18
  - Processing of Information 19
  - Skills in Choosing . . . . . 20 - 22

22 items

Employment Readiness
- Introductory Items . . . . . 23 - 25
- Environmental Problems
  - Economics 31, 32
  - Mobility . . . . . 33 - 35
  - Family/Social
    - Coercion . . . . . 26 - 28
    - Lack of Reinforcement 29, 30

13 items

Self Appraisal
- Information Problems (Self-Knowledge)
  - Needs . . . . . 36 - 39
  - Beliefs and Interests . . . . . 40 - 42
  - Abilities . . . . . 43 - 46
  - Personality . . . . . 47 - 50
- Decision-Making Problems
  - Success in Previous Choices . . . . . 52 - 54
  - Responsibility/Control 51,55,56
  - Anxiety/Fear of Decision-Making . 57 - 59

24 items

For interviewers wishing to obtain clinical information into these specific subcategories, the *VDMI* has been designed to give such information. A definite procedure must be followed for this. In the Appendix of this manual, a form will be found which allows profiling of examinees' subcategories, as they are outlined immediately above. The procedure for obtaining the profiles is as follows:

1. Count the number of "1" responses for each of the subcategories. For example, to obtain the score for "Self-Appraisal — Needs," count the number of "1"s circled for items 36 - 39.

2. Since there are four items in this subcategory, possible scores can range from 0 to 4.

3. Enter this score onto the profile sheet under the correct category. For example, if the obtained total score for the four items of "Needs" is found to be 2, then place an "X" behind "Needs" over the number 2.

4. For "Needs", a "2" corresponds to a percentage (top line) of 50. This indicates that the individual indicated "True" for half of the four items in this subcategory.

5. Continue to do this for all of the other subcategories on the profile sheet.

The above procedure can be somewhat time consuming. It is not recommended that this procedure be done routinely for every interviewee receiving the *VDMI*. Rather, it is a possibility in cases where the interviewer wishes to obtain very specific and precise bits of data about the interviewee. The profile which can be obtained by using the above procedure will enable interviewers to judge, in a very specific way, the relative strengths and weaknesses of interviewees on tightly defined dimensions related to vocational decision-making.

Interviewers wishing to use this procedure should make a copy of the profile sheet for each interviewee on which profiles are to be obtained.

TABLES OF NORMS

Normalized Scores for Decision-Making Readiness
(n = 461)

Score	T-Score	Percentile	Percent
0	21	0.4	0.4
1	24	0.9	0.4
2	26	1.5	0.7
3	28	2.2	0.7
4	31	3.3	1.1
5	33	6.3	3.0
6	35	8.7	2.4
7	38	11.9	3.3
8	40	19.7	7.8
9	42	26.7	6.9
10	45	35.4	8.7
11	47	43.2	7.8
12	49	51.0	7.8
13	52	59.0	8.0
14	54	68.8	9.8
15	56	76.1	7.4
16	59	82.2	6.1
17	61	87.9	5.6
18	63	92.4	4.6
19	66	96.3	3.9
20	68	97.6	1.3
21	70	99.8	2.2
22	73	100.0	0.2

Normalized Scores for Employment Readiness
(n = 461)

Score	T-Score	Percentile	Percent
2	20	0.4	0.4
3	24	1.3	0.9
4	29	3.9	2.6
5	34	10.0	6.1
6	39	17.4	7.4
7	43	32.3	15.0
8	48	47.9	15.6
9	53	67.9	20.0
10	57	82.6	14.8
11	62	93.5	10.8
12	67	98.9	5.4
13	71	100.0	1.1

Normalized Scores for Self Appraisal
(n = 461)

Score	T-Score	Percentile	Percent
1	17	0.2	0.2
3	22	0.4	0.2
4	25	0.9	0.4
5	27	1.5	0.7
6	30	2.2	0.7
7	32	5.6	3.5
8	35	8.9	3.3
9	37	12.6	3.7
10	40	18.2	5.6
11	42	26.2	8.0
12	45	34.5	8.2
13	47	44.3	9.8
14	50	51.2	6.9
15	52	58.4	7.2
16	55	69.2	10.8
17	57	77.7	8.5
18	60	85.0	7.4
19	62	90.7	5.6
20	65	95.4	4.8
21	67	98.5	3.0
22	70	99.1	0.7
23	72	100.0	0.9

Normalized Scores for *VDMI* Total Score
(n = 461)

Score	T-Score	Percentile	Percent
6	17	0.2	0.2
8	19	0.4	0.2
9	20	0.7	0.2
11	22	0.9	0.2
14	26	1.1	0.2
16	28	1.5	0.4
17	29	1.7	0.2
18	31	2.8	1.1
19	32	3.9	1.1
20	33	5.6	1.7
21	34	6.9	1.3
22	35	8.7	1.7
23	36	10.2	1.5
24	37	12.6	2.4
25	39	14.8	2.2
26	40	17.6	2.8
27	41	19.5	2.0
28	42	23.0	3.5
29	43	26.2	3.3
30	44	30.8	4.6
31	45	35.4	4.6
32	47	38.4	3.0
33	48	41.4	3.0
34	49	46.0	4.6
35	50	50.5	4.6
36	51	55.3	4.8
37	52	61.2	5.9
38	54	65.9	4.8
39	55	69.2	3.3
40	56	73.1	3.9
41	57	75.3	2.2
42	58	79.2	3.9
43	59	82.6	3.5
44	60	85.2	2.6
45	62	88.1	2.8
46	63	89.8	1.7
47	64	92.2	2.4
48	65	94.4	2.2
49	66	97.2	2.8
50	67	97.8	0.7
51	69	98.5	0.7
52	70	99.1	0.7
53	71	99.8	0.7
55	73	100.0	0.2

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Appendix - Profiling Sheet

Average Item Responses

			.00 .05 .10 .15 .20 .25 .30 .35 .40 .45 .50 .55 .60 .65 .70 .75 .80 .85 .90 .95 1.0
Decision-Making Readiness	Information Problems (Occupational Knowledge)	Opportunities and Requirements (#1 - #5) 5 items	0 1 2 3 4 5
		Tasks and Duties (#6 - #9) 4 items	0 1 2 3 4
		Rewards and Punishers (#10-#14) 5 items	0 1 2 3 4 5
	Decision-Making Problems	Acquisition of Information (#15-#18) 4 items	0 1 2 3 4
		Processing of Information (#19) 1 item	0 1
		Skills in Choosing (#20-#22) 3 items	0 1 2 3 4
Employment-Readiness		Intro Items (#23-#25) 3 items	0 1 2 3
	Environmental Problems — Family/Social	Coercion (#26-#28) 3 items	0 1 2 3
		Lack of Reinforcement (#29,#30) 2 items	0 1 2
		Economics (#31,#32) 2 items	0 1 2
		Mobility (#33-#35) 3 items	0 1 2 3
Self-Appraisal	Information Problems (Self Knowledge)	Needs (#36-#39) 4 items	0 1 2 3 4
		Beliefs and Interests (#40-#42) 3 items	0 1 2 3
		Abilities (#43-#46) 4 items	0 1 2 3 4
		Personality (#47-#50) 4 items	0 1 2 3 4
	Decision-Making Problems	Success in Previous Choices (#52-#54) 3 items	0 1 2 3
		Responsibility/ Control (#51,55,56) 3 items	0 1 2 3
		Anxiety/Fear of Decision-Making (#57-#59) 3 items	0 1 2 3

VOCATIONAL DECISION-MAKING INTERVIEW

Thomas Czerlinsky, Ph.D.
Research and Training Center
Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute
School of Education and Human Services
University of Wisconsin - Stout
Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751

Interviewee:_____

Interviewer:_____

Date:_____

Summary of VDMI Scores

Scale	Score	Percentile	T-Score
Decision-Making Readiness	____	____	____
Employment Readiness	____	____	____
Self-Appraisal	____	____	____
Total VDMI Score (Sum of above 3 Subscales)	____	____	____

Comments:

This booklet contains the complete Vocational Decision-Making Interview. All of the 63 items should be addressed in order to obtain complete information and effectively utilize the normative data.

Before using this instrument, it is necessary to become familiar with the accompanying VDMI Administration Manual. It contains complete instructions about how to administer and score the VDMI, and how to interpret the obtained scores.

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Decision-Making Readiness

ITEMS	T NS F	
1. There are some specific jobs I have been thinking about.....	1 0 0	Name three jobs you've been thinking about. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
2. I know how much education or training I need for the jobs that I would like to have.....	1 0 0	How much education or training? _____
3. I know how much work experience I need for the jobs I'd like to have.....	1 0 0	How much work experience? _____
4. I have enough information about the opportunities offered by different jobs to decide about jobs.....	1 0 0	Name three job opportunities. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
5. I have enough information about the requirements of different jobs to decide about jobs.....	1 0 0	Name three job requirements. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
6. I understand the responsibilities or duties common to all jobs.....	1 0 0	Name three responsibilities or duties that are common to all jobs. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
7. I know what kinds of tasks I would be doing on the jobs I have thought about.....	1 0 0	Name three such tasks. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
8. I know what responsibilities or duties I would have on the jobs I have been thinking about.....	1 0 0	Name three responsibilities you would have on these jobs. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
9. I know enough about what different jobs are like to help me decide about jobs.....	1 0 0	Name three important things about the jobs you are thinking about. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
10. I could name some rewards or good things about some jobs.....	1 0 0	Name three rewards or good things about some jobs. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
11. I could name some things that I would not like about some jobs.....	1 0 0	Name three things you wouldn't like. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Decision-Making Readiness (continued)

Items	T	NS	F	
12. I could name some of the fringe benefits that I should consider when I decide on a job.....	1	0	0	Name three fringe benefits. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
13. I know enough about the advantages of different jobs which I might consider, to help me decide about jobs.....	1	0	0	Name three advantages. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
14. I know enough about the disadvantages of different jobs which I might consider, to help me decide about jobs.....	1	0	0	Name three disadvantages. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
15. I know where to get information about different jobs.....	1	0	0	Where would you get it? _____
16. I know whom to ask to get information about different jobs.....	1	0	0	Whom would you ask? _____
17. I know how to find out which jobs I would like and could do.....	1	0	0	How would you find out? _____
18. I know how to get enough information on jobs to help me make a job choice.....	1	0	0	
19. There are some jobs that interest me and that I could do well.....	1	0	0	Name three jobs. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
20. I can describe the steps I would take when deciding about a job.....	1	0	0	Describe the steps. _____ _____
21. If I were interested in several jobs, I would know how to choose between them.....	1	0	0	How would you choose? _____ _____
22. I would be good at choosing a job on my own	1	0	0	

TOTAL DECISION-MAKING READINESS = _____

(Count the total number of "ONES" for Decision-Making Readiness -- Items 1-22)

Employment Readiness

Items	T	NS	F	
23. I have decided what kind of job I'd like to have.....	1	0	0	List 3 choices of jobs you'd like to have. 1st Choice: _____ 2nd Choice: _____ 3rd Choice: _____
24. I know what type of career I would like to have. That is, I know what type of work I would like to do for the rest of my life.....	1	0	0	List 3 choices of careers you'd like to have. 1st Choice: _____ 2nd Choice: _____ 3rd Choice: _____
25. I would take any job.....	1	0	0	
26. I would take a job which my family or friends might not approve of.....	1	0	0	
27. I would let others decide which jobs I should take, so that they don't criticize me.....	0	0	1	
28. I don't worry about letting other people down by taking a job they would not approve of.....	1	0	0	
29. My friends or family do not encourage me very much to look for a job.....	0	0	1	
30. My friends or family would be proud of me if I got a job.....	1	0	0	
31. The type of job I will get will not pay enough to make it worth my while.....	0	0	1	
32. Money is one of the reasons to look for a job.....	1	0	0	
33. If I had to, I would move to a different place, in or out of town, to get a job.....	1	0	0	
34. I could find a way to get to work and back home again, no matter where I lived.....	1	0	0	
35. I have few job choices, because it is so hard for me to get around.....	0	0	1	

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT READINESS = ____

(Count the total number of "ONES" for Employment Readiness -- Items 23-35)

Self-Appraisal

Items	T	NS	F	
36. I know how much money I would need to earn from a job.....	1	0	0	How much money? _____
37. I have a preference for the part of town, state, or country that I take a job in.....	1	0	0	Where would you prefer? _____
38. I know what types of work I would not do, even if I made a lot of money at it.....	1	0	0	What types of work? _____
39. I know enough about my own personal needs to decide about jobs.....	1	0	0	List three of your personal needs. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
40. There are certain types of jobs I would not take because of my own beliefs -- that is, because of the things I believe in.....	1	0	0	
41. I know enough about my own beliefs to help me decide about jobs.....	1	0	0	List three of your beliefs that would help you decide whether to take a job or not. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
42. I know enough about my own interests to help me decide about jobs.....	1	0	0	List three of your interests. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
43. I know what kinds of work I am good at doing.....	1	0	0	What kinds of work? _____
44. If I had more training, I know what kinds of work I'd be good at doing.....	1	0	0	What kinds of work? _____
45. I know how my disability limits the the kinds of work I can do.....	1	0	0	How does it limit the kinds of work you can do? _____
46. I know enough about my own abilities to help me decide about jobs.....	1	0	0	List three of your abilities. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
47. I change my opinion of myself a lot.....	0	0	1	
48. I could describe myself, my own personality, accurately.....	1	0	0	
49. I know what kind of life I want for myself.....	1	0	0	
50. I know enough about myself, my own personality, to help me decide about jobs.....	1	0	0	List three things about yourself. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Self-Appraisal (continued)

Items	T	NS	F	
51. I have made decisions about whether to take a job or not	1	0	0	
52. The decisions I have made about jobs have worked out OK	1	0	0	
53. Having to make decisions about jobs is unpleasant	0	0	1	
54. Others have often disagreed with my decisions about jobs	0	0	1	
55. A job will come along, no matter what I do	0	0	1	
56. I have let others decide which job was best for me	0	0	1	
57. I get upset when I have to make a decision about a job	0	0	1	
58. I would rather let things happen by themselves than having to make a choice about a job	0	0	1	
59. I feel confident and sure of myself when I have to make a decision about a job	1	0	0	

TOTAL SELF-APPRAISAL = ____

(Count the total number of "ONES" for Self-Appraisal -- Items 36-59)

Summary Items

60. What types of work would be particularly interesting to you?

_____

61. Of all the things I have asked you about, what are the most important to you in making a good job or career decision?

_____

_____

62. Of all the things I have asked you about, what things would you like help on to make a job choice?

_____

_____

63. In general, what are your reasons for wanting a job?

_____

_____

INTERVIEWER: 1. Check to make sure that all 63 items have been completed. Do not leave any items blank.

2. Record the scores on "Summary of VDMI Scores" on the front page.